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NORTHERN ONTARIO



A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE





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CONTENTS

Features

Table listing features and their page numbers: A northern perspective (1), Indigenous peoples (2), Ring of Fire (3), Wildland fire assessment (6), Downtown revitalization (8), Bike Summit in Thunder Bay (10), Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 (11), Impacts of the cold war (13), Aging in the North (15), Unincorporated territory (16), Thunder Bay neighbourhood safety (18), Hollinger gold mine (19), Species at risk (21), Indigenous planning (22), Local food systems (22), A study of five cities (24).

Districts & People

Table listing districts and people: Toronto district (26), People (26)

Departments

Table listing departments: President's message (27), Professional standards (27), Social media (28)

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On behalf of OPPI Council, we would like to extend a sincere thank you to those who served on the 2015 Excellence in Planning Awards Jury: Dave Aston, MCIP, RPP, Rory Baksh, MCIP, RPP, Steven Davidson, Lee Anne Doyle, MCIP, RPP, Paul Ferris, Steven Heuchert, MCIP, RPP, Ruth Marland, MCIP, RPP, Michael Roschlau, Adrian Smith, MCIP, RPP, Kevin Stolarick, Pamela Sweet, MCIP, RPP, Chris Tyrrell, MCIP, RPP, Heather Watt, MCIP, RPP, Stephen Willis, MCIP, RPP, David Wood. We couldn't do it without you!



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A unique perspective

Things are different up north



By Leslie McEachern

Planners in Northern Ontario are resourceful—and we come by it naturally, influenced by the natural resources that surround us. Vast expanses of towering forests, crystal clear lakes and Precambrian shield separate our cities, towns and rural communities, but also connect us.

Residential intensification, active transportation, natural heritage conservation, climate change and agriculture all take on a slightly unique perspective when viewed in a northern context. One only needs to look as far as the Northern Growth Plan to recognize that the *Places to Grow Act* has a very different application in the north, and so it should—things are different ‘up north’!

This month’s *Journal* is full of insightful articles by planners living and working in the north. They bring unique perspectives to many of the planning issues that face our profession across the province. Natural resource development drives our northern economies, but at the same time, protecting these resources from endangerment, wildland fires and contamination is at the forefront of our planning policies. Revitalization of historic downtowns, containing sprawl and planning for food and transportation systems so as to build healthy, sustainable communities are common themes across northern municipalities. Land use planning is made especially challenging here as population continues to decline in the midst of changes to traditional economies like the forest industry and mining sector.

While distance impacts our ability to exchange information and ideas face to face, technological advancements have changed the way planners in the north communicate and participate in planning initiatives.

Over the last year, OPPI members from across the north and beyond have been meeting monthly via teleconference to share ideas and learn from each other’s varied planning experiences. Northern District’s Lunch & Learn Teleconference series has managed to bridge the vast geographic distances—participants have included those in the far reaches of northwestern Ontario, some from the GTA and everywhere in between.

Telecommunications, in fact, was the focus of our initial Lunch & Learn, when Thora Cartlidge presented the City of Thunder Bay’s public consultation process for any proposed cell tower in close proximity to residential areas. The proliferation of antenna structures across the north reflects growing consumer demand for mobile phone and data services, and the consultation process has raised environmental and health concerns from residents.



Leslie McEachern

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this Northern edition of the *Journal*. Despite the distances that separate us, we continue to find ways to share our unique planning experiences and to learn from each other.

Leslie McEachern, MCIP, RPP, is the chair of the Northern District Leadership Team and director of Planning Services for the City of Thunder Bay.

Lunch & Learn in Northern Ontario

Kris Longston from the City of Greater Sudbury and Matt Dumont (formerly with Dalron Construction, now with Tulloch Engineering) described approaches to housing and transportation in light of the city’s aging population. It is expected that by 2021, one in every five people (or 19 per cent) in Greater Sudbury will be 65 and over.

Cindy Welsh from the City of Timmins shared the municipality’s experience in incorporating the new Hollinger open pit mine into the fabric of the city, and plans to rehabilitate it into a public greenspace—definitely an unusual urban design project!

Karen Beauchamp and Jennifer Pye from the City of Temiskaming Shores provided an overview of recent planning approaches the city has implemented to improve accessibility and raise awareness.

Beverly Hillier and Peter Carello from the City of North Bay described the process the city has recently completed to establish new employment lands at North Bay’s Jack Garland Airport. They have one of only 15 airports in Canada, and the only one in Northern Ontario, with a 10,000-foot runway.

Steve Monet from the City of Greater Sudbury has shared recent research and technical guidance the city is developing to support official plan policies related to protecting lake water quality, and steps they have taken to bring the best available science to decision-making.



Collaboration or coercion?

By Shelagh McCartney

C rises across Northern Ontario's First Nation communities are increasingly becoming headline news. From housing in Attawapiskat to water in Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows) we are becoming more aware of the plight faced by many of these communities. We are also aware of the economic development potential of the chromite reserves located under the traditional lands of these communities.

Communities face the constant struggle of meeting the increased demands of growth, ensuring an adequate food supply and developing local economies that so many municipalities are attempting to tackle. Interwoven with these struggles for First Nation people are the added burdens of defending and protecting traditional lands, languages and culture from the further encroachment of government and private interests. Planning regimes present in Northern Ontario do not offer respite for either set of burdens for the on-reserve population.

Northern First Nation communities face a complicated web of planning policy when planning for their futures. While Reserves themselves remain federal jurisdictions, a number of provincial planning policies such as the *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011*, *Far North Act 2010*, Ring of Fire Secretariat and associated policies of the *Mining Act Crown Forest Sustainability Act* affect the traditional lands of Indigenous communities. As a result of Duty to Consult rulings by Canada's Supreme Court, which set out the Crown's obligation to consult with any First Nation community that may be affected by a policy or program, reserve communities have become active players in the provincial planning frameworks where they were previously ignored. This creates new relationships and opportunities.

Remote and isolated First Nation communities have small populations of about 100-1,000 and are limited by not only logistics of distance and connectivity but also lack financial and

technical resources. Councils, elders and community leaders have countless obligations within their community. And these communities face, what is described in provincial policy as, "long-standing socio-economic gaps," in education, health, economics and housing outcomes. These are all problems for which planning should be part of the solutions.

However, provincial policy for Northern Ontario remains strictly focused on economic development due to resource extraction. Planning has become a mechanism that creates clarity for parties in accessing the land needed for resource extraction. The *Far North Act 2010*, which encompasses 31 remote communities of which 29 are First Nation, requires that no major development—read resource extraction—can take place without communities having entered into the act's process of creating a community-based plan. While this process is described as collaborative, focused on equal representation on the newly-formed planning committee, the goals of each plan are pre-determined by *section 5* of the act. Pressure to create plans as a means of conducting development further undermines the notion of collaboration and community-based planning.

A goal of the *Far North Act* is conservation. As climate change becomes an increasingly important political issue in Southern Ontario, land in the north becomes part of a policy solution. The creation of a 225,000 square kilometre network of protected area mandated by the act, designed to maximize storage and sequestration of carbon is an easy sacrifice to make from hundreds of kilometres away. This continues a historical process of drawing lines on a map to divide this territory abstractly, this territory that was once in its entirety the lands of Indigenous peoples. Land again becomes simply a tool through which to achieve policy goals.

Collaborative community-based planning, or "a joint planning process" is described as the main purpose of the *Far North Act*, but it cannot occur when both the process and the outcomes are determined by only one of the partners. These partnerships of First Nation with the government and a private company are strained due to colonial legacies and decades of negative experience with settler governments. Economic development in the region can and



Shelagh McCartney

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should benefit all parties. The planning process should not be the tool which policymakers use to extract only economic agendas. Planning as a discipline should not view community development in silos of economic development, environmental protection and infrastructure development but as a holistic system. It should recognize the interconnected nature through which community and natural systems wealth develops.

Planning must recognize the value of Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. While the act states, “First Nations may contribute their traditional knowledge and perspectives on protection and conservation,” such a concession does not go far enough. Collaboration is achieved through equal participation in the design of the process and goals—partnership. The current system views traditional knowledge and Indigenous values as one required data input, to be weighed and possibly discarded against other evidence. Traditional knowledge then becomes an element of planning, which is extracted from communities out of context and put into formal documents, to be compared and often contrasted with scientific evidence. This extraction and abstraction, as with previous land transactions with governments, is a form of Indigenous dispossession.

Collaboration and authentic partnership requires mutual understanding and respect for not only the input itself but for the process of gathering it. The *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011* speaks to the needed capacity building for Indigenous peoples in creating relationships with industry and government, helping to alleviate some of the technical gaps which currently exist. There is little evidence of capacity building to address partners’ cultural gaps in respect of First Nation people’s world view. Planners and Ontarians need to engage in a capacity building process of their own to meet the plan’s goal of forming a “new relationship” and

mutual understanding. Consultation with First Nation people currently requires that community leaders understand the planning process and be able to converse in highly-technical textualized planning discourse. However, planners should value and understand Indigenous ways of knowing and culture and how these go against the very foundations of planning and understanding the land. Mutual understanding cannot be developed through a one-side capacity building process. The values and interests of First Nation peoples must also be given weight, which cannot be done when issues are constantly viewed through a Western lens.

Planning can play an important role in closing the long-standing economic gaps and fostering a new commitment to mutual understanding. Planners can help to secure more equitable outcomes for communities in Ontario’s north, by learning to value the interests and culture of all partners in the north. Continuing the tradition of dispossession, and of using the north’s land as a tool to meet policy goals and objectives of the south is not a new relationship but a continuation of the colonial experience.

As a discipline, planning ought to uphold its obligations and not devalue the concept of collaboration by simply making it a necessary step in the decision-making process. Community-based land use planning should have at its core the needs, values and interests of the community it is serving, objectives should not be pre-determined. In this way, and through an understanding of Indigenous knowledge, planning can reach its full potential for all those sharing Northern Ontario.

Dr. Shelagh McCartney, BES, BArch, MDes, DDes, OAA, MRAIC, LEED AP, is director of the +city lab and an assistant professor at the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Ryerson University.

Land use planning strategy needed

Ring of Fire?

By Victoria Prouse & Don McConnell

The Ring of Fire’s immense economic potential increases the impetus to act quickly in establishing a land use planning strategy that is sensitive to local issues and also reacts to the broad-scale implications of multiple resource-extraction projects. While, the *Far North Act* allows flexibility to implement projects that cannot be achieved through the *PPS*, the requirements must be agreed upon collaboratively among all stakeholders.

Ring of Fire

In 2007, the discovery of nickel in the Ring of Fire region brought instant national and international attention to Ontario’s Far North. The Ring of Fire comprises 5,000 square km. (about six times larger than Alberta’s Athabasca Oil Sands deposit) in the James Bay lowlands, approximately 400 km. northeast of Thunder Bay. It is centered on McFaulds Lake, near the Attawapiskat River in Kenora District. Following initial discovery, subsequent testing revealed this area possessed some of the world’s largest chromite stores.

Mineral deposits including nickel, copper, zinc, gold, diamonds and chromite extend over 1.5-million ha. Chromite is a highly valued mineral used to manufacture stainless steel.

The economic potential of the Ring of Fire has catalyzed the need to establish a development framework for the area. The development will foster a century of mining activity fuelling spin-off jobs and economic growth for generations¹. In the first 10 years, estimates anticipate that the Ring of Fire will generate up to \$9.4-billion in GDP, up to \$6.2-billion for Ontario’s mining industry, create and sustain up to 5,500 jobs annually and generate almost \$2-billion in government revenue. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce anticipates the Ring of Fire will generate \$25-billion in new economic activity in the next 30 years². The Province of Ontario has committed \$1-billion for Ring of Fire infrastructure.

Land use planning implications

Momentum and excitement continue to grow over the potential of this unprecedented economic opportunity. However, confusion



and conflict have emerged in establishing land use planning policy regulations and a development protocol. Never before has it been as critical to establish a strategic, culturally-sensitive and sustainable land use planning paradigm in the Far North. As of 2013, 21 companies hold mining claims in the region³. Indeed, the increased attention to the area has created an impetus for policymakers to critically assess existing land use planning legislation in the Far North.

The Far North comprises 42 per cent of the province's land base⁴. It may be surprising to planners in Ontario that activities occurring in the Ring of Fire—and in the Far North overall—are not legislated by the *Planning Act* or the *Provincial Policy Statement*. The *Far North Act (2010)* governs land use and development on public land in the Far North (see map). From this perspective, nearly half of the province is not subject to the *PPS*. In fact, development of the Ring of Fire would not be allowed under the *PPS* since it is located in the James Bay Lowlands (part of the world's second largest continuous peatland system)⁵ and the *PPS* prohibits development and site alteration in significant or coastal wetlands.

Far North land use planning operates at a different scale than in the rest of the province. In the absence of overarching planning policy guidelines, the *Far North Act* adopts a project-specific planning approach, analyzing impacts and benefits on a case-by-case basis. Under the act, all development proceeds using a Community Based Land Use Plan, created collaboratively between the province and First Nation communities directly impacted by the project. The



Victoria Prouse



Don McConnell

community-based plan focuses on achieving local cultural, environmental and economic sustainability by negotiating a mutually-beneficial strategy that ensures a leadership role for First Nation peoples throughout the process. All activities must be consistent with the plan following implementation.

In contrast, the *Planning Act* and *PPS* govern land use planning activities using a regional perspective. This legislation is less flexible than the *Far North Act*, establishing broad regulations for diverse regions within Ontario. The regional framework attends to province-wide implications of development rather than focusing on local areas.

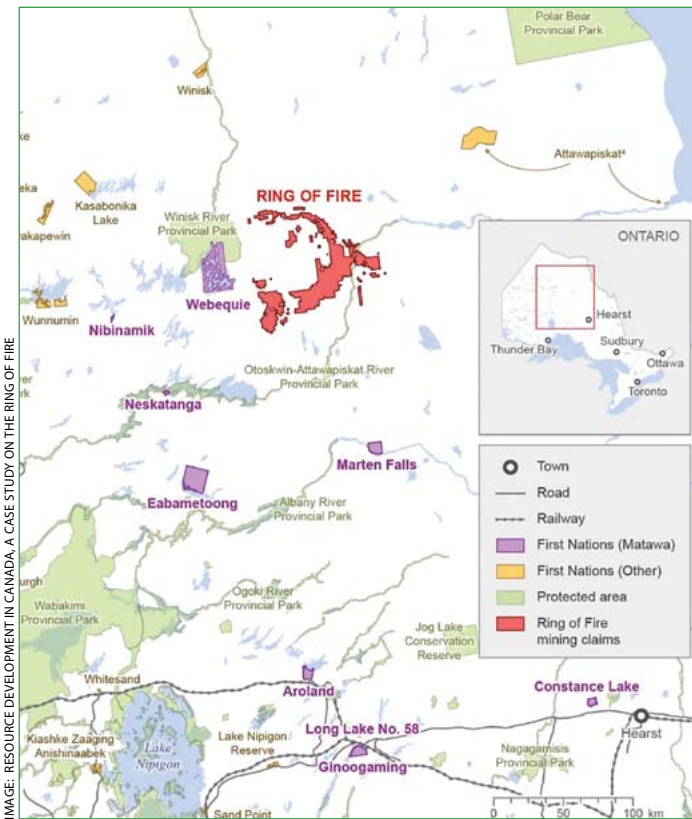
Potential problems associated with land use planning framework in the Far North

The *Far North Act*'s project-specific approach ensures a context-sensitive, flexible methodology for development. However, the lack of an all-encompassing planning framework makes it difficult for government, First Nation and potential developers to have a uniform understanding of regulations. Currently, each stakeholder possesses contrasting and vague agendas⁶. In November 2013, Cliffs Natural Resources suspended the company's chromite project due to "the uncertain timelines and risks associated with the development of necessary infrastructure to bring this project online⁷." In March 2015, Noront Resources bought all of Cliffs' Ring of Fire claims for \$20-million. Irrespective of Noront's purchase, Cliffs' withdrawal affirms the confusion associated with the existing project-based approach and the need to establish universal "ground rules" for developing this sensitive area.

Initial steps to align interests and work collaboratively towards a strategy have been achieved through the Framework Agreement signed by the Matawa Chiefs Council and the Province of Ontario in March 2014. Under the agreement, First Nation groups within the Ring of Fire jurisdiction recognize a government-to-government relationship of mutual accountability, respect and understanding. However, this agreement has yet to evolve into concrete policy directives and a clear strategy for sustainable land use planning and development in the Ring of Fire.

The grassroots nature of the *Far North Act* inhibits the coordination of different development initiatives and prevents an understanding of the ensuing local, regional and global impacts of intensive resource processing of these projects altogether. The Ring of Fire region has immense ecological and cultural value: it is a significant carbon storehouse, boreal forest, wetland and First Nation's ancestral landscape. Environmental organizations argue for more comprehensive legislation to more effectively capture the cumulative impact of project development across the region⁸.

While there is no consistent development approval process, environmental assessments are a useful tool for municipalities and government agencies in exposing and planning for long-term environmental impacts of proposed projects. Provincial and federal governments have separate EA requirements and standards, though these assessments are typically coordinated⁹. However, EAs may not effectively contribute to sustainable land use planning in the Ring of Fire.



Location of the Ring of Fire and nearby First Nation communities

While municipalities, provincial ministries, and public bodies, such as conservation authorities, are legally required to proceed with EAs for major infrastructure projects under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*, private sector initiatives do not typically require an EA. Thus, mining companies wishing to process resources are not necessarily legally bound to complete an EA for all or parts of their operations. The government may impose legislation requiring the completion of an EA. Companies may be required to conduct EAs for specific portions of a mining operation, including road infrastructure, though the process for these types of development are abridged.

Cliffs Chromite Project and Noront Resources' Eagles Nest voluntarily completed EAs. Yet, when EAs are completed, they proceed on a project-specific basis: synergistic consequences of intensive resource development in the Ring of Fire are not captured in a single project's EA.

Environmental organizations propose implementing a regional EA framework encompassing the multiple and diverse projects within the Ring of Fire. Furthermore, though mining companies must abide by the Ministry of Environment's exploration application process, the *Mining Act* does not legislate an EA review process for mining exploration activities, despite these activities having an impact on the ecosystem.

Towards sustainable land use planning in the Ring of Fire

The *Far North Act* mandates the Ministry of Natural Resources to create and implement the Far North Land Use Strategy, a regional framework for integrated development. According to the ministry, the strategy will "provide policy guidance that joint planning teams can draw from to help consider the Far North as a whole as they develop their plans, [...] considering matters of common interests across the Far North¹⁰."

The strategy may potentially rectify the gap in the existing policy and development framework by crafting a more structured regional policy approach for securing long-term economic, social and cultural sustainability in the Far North. The Ministry of Natural Resources portrays the strategy as a step towards fulfilling the role of the *PPS*: containing policy guidance on cultural, social, environmental and economic interests to assist joint planning teams in considering broad-scale interests while developing each community-based land use plan¹¹. However, the policy guidance in the strategy is not legally binding; the Ministry of Natural Resources states that policy "statements" may only be implemented if a First Nation-Ontario Joint Body is created under the *Far North Act*.

Victoria Prouse, OPPI candidate member, is the planning coordinator for Sault Ste. Marie's Downtown Development Initiative. Don McConnell, MCIP, RPP, is the director of planning in Sault Ste. Marie and has provided a northern perspective on numerous planning issues.

Endnotes

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Wildland fire assessment

By Cindy Welsh & Peter Tonazzo

The inclusion of wildland fires as a natural hazard is timely for practicing planners in Northern Ontario. First and foremost, municipalities are encouraged to direct development away from forested areas which exhibit characteristics for wildland fires. The *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* does, however, provide planning authorities the option of permitting development, as long as the risk is appropriately mitigated.

Northern Ontario planning authorities and professional planners have a key role to play, starting with implementing this new provincial land use planning interest by developing regulations and development standards to be incorporated into municipal planning documents.

A history of wildfires

Wildland fires can have catastrophic consequences, even with today's early detection and response systems, especially in Northern Ontario where the risk is the highest because much of the province's boreal forest is located in the north.

Recent examples include the Kirkland Lake 8 and Timmins 9 fires which both started on May 20, 2012. The Kirkland Lake fire was located only three kilometres from the town and the Timmins fire was about 30 kilometres from the city centre. Months later, when they were finally out 41,850 ha. had been burnt—2,326 ha. at Kirkland Lake 8, and 39,524 ha. at Timmins 9.¹ Both fires triggered widespread evacuations resulting in millions of dollars in damages and a significant loss of wildlife and habitat. Fortunately, there were no lives lost due to either fire,² however, this has not always been the case.

In the early part of the 20th century, Northern Ontario recorded three of the most devastating wildland fire disasters in Canada: the 1911 Porcupine Fire, 1916 Matheson Fire and 1922 Haileybury Fire. The death toll in each was significant.

At the time it was common practice to use fire as a way to clear land for settlements. On July 11, 1911, fire swept through the newly settled mining camp of Porcupine, now the City of Timmins. Many smaller fires converged into a larger blaze, due to the hot and dry weather. The estimated size of the fire was 200,000 ha., with an official death toll of 73. Five years later, on July 29, 1916, a number of fires set by settlers to clear land near Matheson merged, again due to warm weather. The fire measured 64 km. across and razed the community of Black River-Matheson and surrounding area. The estimated size of the fire was 200,000 ha. and officially, 223 died.³

The Haileybury Fire started on October 4, 1922 and burned into

the next day. Again, small fires to clear land combined into a large blaze. The estimated size of the fire was 168,000 ha., completely destroying the Town of Haileybury. Officially, 43 people died.⁴

Although historic settlement practices such as slash-and-burn are far less prevalent and there are better early detection and fire suppression technologies, wildland fire remains a very real threat to communities across Northern Ontario. With global warming, continued development and increasing numbers of people venturing further into the wilderness, the wildland fire threat is as prevalent today as it was 100 years ago. In Northern Ontario, one could argue that it is not a matter of if, but when the next wildland fire will threaten a community.



Cindy Welsh



Peter Tonazzo

Identifying hazardous forest types

Hazardous forests are unmanaged stands dominated by conifer species. White and black spruce, immature jack pine and conifer forests in poor health represent the most extreme wildfire risk. Mature jack pine forests and mixed wood forests with >50 per cent conifer species are considered to be high risk.

Physical attributes such as fuel arrangement, overall health and density also play an important role in determining the risk level of a forest. Arrangement of fuel from ground to canopy can increase a forest's risk level. Alternatively, conditions such as standing water or managed forests where extreme risk species are well spaced, pruned and ground fuels have been removed, can lower the risk, even with a prevalence of extreme risk conifer species.

Wildland Fire Hazard mapping is available through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Land Information Ontario Warehouse. This tool will aid in identifying hazardous forest types within a municipality. On-site assessment by a qualified professional is also crucial in verifying forest attributes such as health and fuel arrangement, which play an important role in determining the overall hazard rating.

Mitigation measures

A wealth of information about mitigation measures exists through Ontario's FireSmart program. The primary focus is vegetation management. More specifically, extreme risk tree species should be well spaced from each other and buildings/structures. Low lying branches should be pruned to at least two metres above ground level and ground fuels should be removed.

The creation of a fire break around the periphery of a development is one of the most effective ways of reducing wildfire risk. Fire breaks can include roads or managed open spaces such as recreational areas



Kirkland Lake 8 Fire

and trails. Another mitigation design feature is to establish parking areas around the periphery of large-scale developments.

In some instances, vegetation management may not be environmentally appropriate as hazardous forests tend to be unmanaged, relatively untouched woodlands with other natural heritage features present. So planning authorities should also have regard to fire suppression and emergency response, including an adequate water supply and ensuring two separate routes to and from developments.

Municipal implementation

Implementation will depend on a variety of circumstances, notably, the amount of hazardous forests within a municipality. Thus, identification is the first step.

There are municipalities, primarily in Northern Ontario, where extreme and high-risk forest types dominate the landscape. These municipalities may find it prudent to develop a comprehensive community-wide wildland fire plan. Such a plan should be multidisciplinary, addressing matters beyond the PPS, including matters related to public notification, emergency response and education. A comprehensive wildfire plan can also identify public mitigation measures, such as fire breaks to protect existing developments.

In other parts of the province where urbanized areas, agricultural lands and deciduous species dominate the landscape, extreme and high-risk forests are far less prevalent. In these cases, targeting specific areas may be most appropriate. In other instances, municipalities may choose a more reactive, case-by-case approach led by the development community.

After hazardous forest types have been identified and assessed, planning authorities should undertake a strategic policy review, focusing on opportunities to direct future development away from hazardous forests. Given that undeveloped vegetated areas are the focus, the identification of other natural heritage features should also be incorporated into this review.

Official plans and zoning by-laws are appropriate tools to support the outcomes of the strategic review. Implementation tools to support wildland fire mitigation measures are not always as straightforward. Ongoing vegetation maintenance is vital to mitigation. Site plan control can be appropriately utilized to mitigate the threat to specific properties. However, there does not appear to be any one land use tool or combination that can effectively address mitigation measures for subdivisions without creating potential enforcement difficulties. In the case of a periphery fire break, to ensure ongoing vegetation control, municipalities should consider land ownership, similar to a neighbourhood park or public infrastructure. Alternatively, a condominium corporation could be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of mitigation measures.

Next steps for implementation

The province, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, has committed to supporting local implementation of the new wildland fire policy. Course scale values mapping is available through the Land Information Ontario and training programs have been established.

The province will be releasing the Wildland Fire Assessment and Mitigation Standards referred to in the PPS in the near future. It is anticipated that these standards will be presented in a manner similar to information in the FireSmart program. There are also a growing number of qualified professionals, including foresters, community emergency management coordinators and FireSmart community planning consultants who are capable of providing expert advice to municipalities. Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry regional office staff have also been trained and are available to assist municipalities.

Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP, is the manager of planning for the City of Timmins. Peter Tonazzo, MCIP, RPP, is a planner with the City of Sault Ste. Marie. Both Cindy and Peter are members of the OPPI Northern District Leadership Team.

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Downtown revitalization

By David Welwood and Kasper Koblauch

From Kenora to North Bay and from Sault Ste. Marie to Hearst, communities in Northern Ontario are recognizing the importance of attractive, vibrant downtown cores in retaining and attracting youth and newcomers. Often encapsulated under the downtown revitalization banner, northern communities are using planning tools such as Community Improvement Plans and master plans to accomplish a range of objectives such as revitalizing brownfield sites and providing affordable housing. This article briefly highlights the experience of the City of Greater Sudbury.

Sudbury then and now

Still known to many as a nickel mining town, recent years have seen considerable change in the city's socio-economic makeup due to both diversification and specialization. Today, only about 6,000 people work directly in mining (compared to about 22,000 in 1975¹) while about 10,000 now work in mining-related services, such as engineering and equipment manufacturing and sales². The population of the Regional Municipality of Sudbury (amalgamated as the City of Greater Sudbury in 2001) peaked in 1971 at 174,000 and declined to a low of 152,000 in 1986 and has now recovered to 160,000 (2011)³.

The city is now a major centre for regional healthcare and commercial retail, serving a much wider population across northeastern Ontario. The city has also become a centre for post-secondary education, with a university and two public colleges. Along with industrial and demographic shifts have come new demands for a more diverse array of cultural amenities, such as theatres, niche retailers, live music, cafes and restaurants. Nowhere has this shift been more evident than in the downtown.

Sudbury's historic downtown has suffered in ways similar to many other North American urban centres that have experienced the rise of automobile-dominated shopping plazas on the urban fringe. Over the past decade, however, significant positive changes have been observed downtown. This has been complemented by an increased level of civic engagement and a renewed interest in downtown placemaking.

Revitalizing downtown

City planners have played a proactive role in organizing and building on the grassroots energies of local groups and the

business community. Using tools available under the *Planning Act* and enabled by policies set out in the city's official plan, such as community improvement plans, the city was able to turn this local energy into tangible physical improvements.

Community improvement plans have served as key tools in facilitating physical changes to buildings in the downtown. Also, the city has exempted the downtown core from development charges and has implemented a 10-year tax-increment-equivalent grant for development in the downtown area and other urban centres in the city. CIPs also provide for planning and building fee rebates and project development study/report grants⁴.

The Downtown Master Plan (2012) sets out a framework for physical changes that will help reinforce the downtown area's role in the region and improve the area's economic, cultural and retail activity⁵. A pillar of the master plan is the presence of Laurentian University's School of

Architecture in downtown Sudbury. It brings new residents to the downtown and helps move towards a more active core, 24/7. By 2017 the school will host 400 students and a number of former office spaces downtown have already begun to be adapted to accommodate student housing.

Other highlights of the master plan include development of the Elgin Street Greenway, a multi-use pathway alongside the downtown rail lands, redevelopment of a public space near city hall, construction of a new public library and turning a busy thoroughfare into a tree-lined boulevard⁶.

Recognizing the importance of art, culture, and the cultural economy, Sudbury has also recently adopted its Cultural Plan, which was shaped by a steering committee of local citizens and stakeholders with input from more than 16,000 people. The plan seeks to build on the city's unique creative identity and multicultural roots (including First Nation, Francophone, Anglophone and others). Initiatives include creating additional public spaces for arts and culture, and developing a public art program.

Passionate citizens and local groups have played an instrumental role in igniting a renewed interest in the downtown, most notably a non-profit called We Live Up Here Urban Arts.

This group of DIYers is known for brightening up streetscapes and bringing life to former blank spaces with striking murals, and publishing a photography book highlighting life and culture in Sudbury called "We Live Up Here." The group also worked with city



Dave Welwood



Kasper Koblauch



IMAGE COURTESY OF DAVID WELWOOD

Durham Street at Elgin Street

hall and the Downtown BIA to organize a summer street festival called UpFest, a festival of urban art and emerging music which embraces and celebrates downtown Sudbury⁷.

Local business owners, supported by an active BIA, have also played a major role in renewing the look, feel and range of offerings in the downtown. Restaurants and cafes have popped up throughout the area, catering to a new demographic and bringing evening and weekend life to the core.

Future outlook

As with other northern communities, Sudbury faces a challenge in attracting new downtown residential development in the absence of population growth pressures. This is especially true when land on the urban fringe remains relatively inexpensive. Projected to grow by only 500 residents per year, the city needs to be very strategic with its investments. The city also anticipates growth in its aging population⁸. Further opportunities for downtown revitalization lie in a growing senior and student population, who benefit from more walkable, less car-dependant environments.

David Welwood, MCIP, RPP, is a graduate of York University's Masters in Environmental Studies (Planning) program, and is a planner with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Municipal Services Office - North in Sudbury. Kasper Koblauch is a graduate of Ryerson University's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program and was previously a planner with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Municipal

Services Office - North in Sudbury. He is currently studying French at Université Catholique de Lyon, France.

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Bike Summit in Thunder Bay

Biking means business

By Robert Eady & Adam Krupper

When OPPI introduced its Active Transportation Call to Action in 2012, it was easy for Thunder Bay to jump on board as an active transportation transformation was already well underway. It has been working since 2009 to put its programs and infrastructure in place. The city now has over 47 km. of multi-use trails, 34 km. of bike lanes, two active living corridors and bike racks on every transit bus.

In keeping with its goal to engage employers and decision-makers, Thunder Bay hosted its first Bike Summit this past spring.



Adam Krupper & Robert Eady

Themed Biking Means Business, the summit was an opportunity to show how a strong cycling culture is a competitive advantage for Thunder Bay.

University of Waterloo School of Planning assistant professor Dr. Markus Moos told participants about the economic impacts of active transportation and how it is

key to attracting and retaining talented professionals in Thunder Bay. As our cities transition from an industrial to a service economy cycling symbolizes the different needs of the employees this economy attracts.

Moos explained that today's generation of young professionals look for communities that suit their lifestyles, then they look for work that interests them. Similarly, businesses look to establish themselves in communities that will attract the kind of talent they need. Thunder Bay is a community that offer balance low-cost living and great active transportation infrastructure.

Share the Road Cycling Coalition executive director Jamie Stuckless announced that Thunder Bay had been selected as one of three cities to pilot its new Bicycle Friendly Business Program project. The project helps businesses encourage cycling through education, engineering, encouragement, evaluation and planning. Stuckless sees an opportunity for businesses to attract young customers and employees, gain a retail boost to the bottom line and provide a sustainable and attractive workplace.



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

Active transportation is more than a 'nice to have' option

SustainMobility executive director Glenn Gumulka introduced the CycleLoan, a turnkey bike fleet program designed to encourage

employers to encourage bike sharing among their employees. Thunder Bay District Health Unit was the first employer in the city to buy into the program with the purchase of four CycleLoan bicycles for their employees to use during business hours. SustainMobility is now seeking partnerships with other groups such as local hoteliers, community groups and Confederation College.

Thunder Bay's first Bike Summit attracted hundreds of participants and succeeded in conveying an understand that active transportation is more than a 'nice to have' option. It is integral to the new economy. Organizers are currently planning a second bike summit in 2017.

Robert Eady, HBSc, MCP, RPP, is a planner with the City of Thunder Bay Development & Emergency Services Department and has an avid interest in active transportation and the preservation of heritage buildings. Adam Krupper, M.A., is the mobility coordinator for the City of Thunder Bay and has been a cycling commuter and advocate for 18 years.



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Implementation in small northern municipalities

By Bridget Schulte-Hostedde

When you think of Northern Ontario, the images that may come to mind are of vast tracts of uninhabited and rugged lands, forests and beautiful lakes.

While this is true for much of the north, it is also true that Ontario's 144 northern municipalities make decisions every day that impact the development and use of that land. These decisions can be complex and planners must be well informed if they are to plan strategically for their communities' futures.

Land use planning decisions are guided by the policy framework established by the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* and the local planning documents that implement it. The new PPS reflects the unique needs of northern municipalities, including those that experience slow growth or population decline. There is added flexibility for these largely rural communities that have small populations and little development pressure.

The province's recently released draft [Introduction to the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 - Northern Ontario](#) provides guidance on how small northern municipalities can implement the PPS with appropriate flexibility to recognize unique circumstances. A few areas of flexibility in policy implementation are explored below.

Less complex comprehensive review—Physical constraints in northern communities, like floodplains and rocky outcrops, are not unusual and can limit the opportunities for development within historic settlement area boundaries. Some municipalities considered the comprehensive review requirements outlined in the *PPS 2005* to be onerous in situations where they may have needed just a bit more land for a few extra lots that couldn't be accommodated due to physical constraints.

While the *PPS 2014* clarifies that physical constraints such as these should be considered through the comprehensive review process, this review need not be as complex for small, northern communities as it would be for the expansion of a larger urban settlement area. It notes that the "level of detail of the assessment should correspond with the complexity and scale of the settlement boundary or development proposal." (*PPS* section 6.0 Definitions)

Less onerous intensification—For a northern community with a small settlement area on private services, appropriate

intensification may be as simple as changing the use of an underutilized building. For example, the 2015 official plan for the Township of The North Shore (population 509) encourages intensification in its settlement areas, but anticipates that the majority will be through redevelopment, infill or conversions given the slow rate of growth and servicing constraints.

Accommodating rural municipalities without settlement areas—The *PPS* now includes specific policy direction for municipalities that do not have settlement areas. This is a fairly common situation in northern Ontario, where settlement patterns in some municipalities never resulted in a built-up, concentrated area of mixed uses. The *PPS* clarifies the kind of development for which municipalities without settlement areas should plan. It also provides flexibility for each municipality to justify and define what that will look like. This has the added value of helping enhance rural character and quality of place.

Municipalities must still develop official plan policy to prevent unlimited and unplanned rural lot creation that could cause future land use conflicts, unanticipated demands for infrastructure expansion, or servicing burdens.

The Township of Joly (population 280) is an entirely rural municipality with no settlement area. Consistent with the *PPS*, Joly's first official plan (approved in 2015) permits limited residential development in the rural area. It includes locally-

driven policy on limiting lot creation, primarily by limiting and scaling the number of consents per original land parcel size, providing a minimum lot size, and identifying the need to maintain the rural and natural landscape.

Leveraging rural character and assets—One of the indisputable advantages of living in northern Ontario is its rural character, often in the form of its natural assets. Healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by building on rural character, and leveraging rural amenities and assets (*PPS* section 1.1.4.1.a). The *PPS* includes policies that promote recreational and tourism opportunities, development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels,

and awareness of the importance of shoreline areas.

The *PPS* gives municipalities the policy foundation to recognize and protect rural natural assets through official plan policy and related decisions. Northern official plan objectives often include the protection of the natural environment and recreational opportunities, but also often promote waterfront living. It can be challenging to balance these priorities.

The Township of McDougall (population 2,700) has addressed some of these priorities. Its 2015 official plan



Bridget Schulte-Hostedde

Northern statistics

- 32% of Ontario's municipalities (144 single tier)
- 6% of Ontario's population (est. 800,000)
- 71% of northern municipalities have populations less than 2,000

Snapshot of planning in the North

- 97% of municipalities (140 of 144) are covered by an official plan
 - 57% (80 of 140) of these are consistent with PPS 2005
 - 11% (9 of 80) are consistent with PPS 2014
- Approx. 36 official plan update programs are underway
- 34% of municipalities are exempt from minister's approval of official plan amendments
- 94% of consent and 72% of subdivision decisions are made locally

appropriately directs the majority of new growth to Nobel, its main settlement area. However, in recognition of growing interest in its waterfront, policies also direct that any new waterfront development will preserve character and quality. This includes tailoring lot sizes to reflect lake size and waterfront character. Development will only be permitted if it will not create an unreasonable demand for more services. Shoreline vegetation is to be retained, and best management practices for stormwater management and construction mitigation are to be applied. These policies will help ensure that the municipality's natural features remain an asset over the long-term.

Focus on active transportation—Not all PPS policies apply to every site, community or municipality. Northern rural municipalities that do not have local transit service are not expected to include related policies in their official plans. These communities however can take advantage of PPS policies that promote active transportation such as walking and cycling.

Several small municipalities along the north shore of Lake Huron have incorporated related policies into their recently approved official plans. For example, the Town of Blind River's 2015 official plan envisions a system of recreational trails and dedicated bike paths. Proposed community improvement projects include improving sidewalks and road surfaces for safer and more comfortable pedestrian and cycling use. Blind River's policies, and similar policies adopted by the other north shore communities, put them in a good position to contribute to the success of more extensive active transportation routes in the area.

Conclusion

Land use planners working in the north play an essential role in ensuring responsible and thoughtful local land use planning decision-making that results in sustainable and healthy northern communities.

Bridget Schulte-Hostedde, MCIP, RPP, is the manager of community planning and development with Municipal Services Office – North (Sudbury) for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. She is involved in the implementation of land use planning-related provincial policies and programs across northeastern Ontario.



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Small town evolution

By Sue Heffernan

The Cold War decades from 1950 to 1990 represent the time when Canada, the United States, and other Western countries faced perceived and/or real threats of nuclear war. During the early years of the Cold War, three massive radar lines were constructed across the Canadian north: the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line, the Mid-Canada line and the Pinetree line¹. The latter two were located in Northern Ontario. The goal of the radar lines was to monitor Soviet plane traffic across the Arctic in order to intercept planes, presumably armed with atomic weapons. Another part of this system was the construction of air raid sirens in many municipalities and the promotion of nuclear fallout shelters, including the June, 1960 construction of a demonstration shelter at the corner of University and College in downtown Toronto².

My research examines the impact of the Cold War on northern Ontario, with the community of Moosonee—a Pinetree radar base—as a case study. Moosonee is a small northern Cree community located south of James Bay, directly across the Moose River from Moose Factory Island³. By the mid-1950s Moosonee became a shipping centre for northerly radar base developments. Further growth occurred as a result of the construction and operation of a Royal Canadian Air Force radar base adjacent to Moosonee from 1961 to 1975.

Moosonee was typical of Pinetree sites in that it had its own water, sewer and power plants, recreational facilities (e.g., pool, bowling alley and gym), public school, chapel, barracks and housing subdivision. The base, with its population of 450 military personnel and families, was located within walking distance of the Town of Moosonee. The town's population grew from 247 in 1956 to almost 1,000 by 1961 as people migrated to

Moosonee looking for work on military projects⁴. This growth had almost immediate impacts on the local environment. Ontario Water Resources Commission water testing had shown local drinking water sources as free of coliform bacteria in 1959, but by 1961, the commission and Department of Health staff warned of possible water-borne epidemics. The key issue was the lack of public sewage treatment facilities in the town. As well, private methods of sewage disposal—septic tanks and beds—were not working in the muskeg landscape⁵. Sewage was collecting in ditches and flowing into local water supply sources, such as the Moose River.



Sue Heffernan

It took almost 10 years for water and sewage facilities to be built in Moosonee, and during that time a system of local governance evolved. Residents began by forming a citizens committee called the “Moosonee Townsite Development Board” in order to demand better water, sewer and fire protection services. This led to the eventual formation in 1968 of a quasi-municipal, legislated board called the Moosonee Development Area Board⁶.

When the Moosonee Pinetree radar base closed in 1975 the board and neighbouring communities, such as Moose Factory, insisted on participation in an area-wide Closure Committee. The work of this committee led to the

transformation of the radar base into a regional high school. This was significant as children from Moosonee and James Bay communities had spent years travelling south to Sudbury and



Moosonee Pinetree Radar Base, 1962

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North Bay for Grades 9 to 13. Local people insisted that the buildings on the radar base be maintained and redesigned to form a high school campus⁷. In addition, the board pulled down every second house in the RCAF subdivision and sold fifty of the dwellings to the Moosonee Metis and Non-Status Indian Association and to Moose Band (now called Moose Cree First Nation).

Typically, northern resource towns experience boom and bust cycles as mining and forestry companies build, operate and close in isolated locations. In the case of Moosonee the development cycle was quite different. Instead of boom and bust, Moosonee experienced two cycles of adaptation—adaptation to growth, with its associated pollution and infrastructure demands, and adaptation to closure. Moosonee simply refused to experience the bust phase.

Northern research has generally focused on resource development (mining and forestry towns) and mega-projects such as the James Bay Hydro Project. To date, little work has been undertaken on the relationship between Cold War military activity in the north and the landscapes, communities and people affected by such activity. As planner Jill Grant recently stated, “The past matters. Planners crave insight into why things are the way they are so that we can think about how to make them better⁸.”

Sue Heffernan, MCIP, RPP, has a Masters in Regional Planning and Resource Development (Waterloo). She is currently a PhD Candidate in the Human Studies program at Laurentian University where she has taught Geography of Northern Canada as a sessional professor since 2006. Sue began her career as a Land Use Planner with Ministry of Natural Resources in Ignace (NW Ontario). Later

she became a Municipal Advisor with Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in North Bay and Sudbury, retiring from government in 2010.

Endnotes

- ¹ Although Pinetree bases were primarily northern there was even a site at Edgar, just north of Barrie
- ² Archives of Ontario, RG 6-2, B291145, File: Fallout Shelters 1960, Edgar Bevis, Coordinator (Survival), Emergency Measures Branch, Memo to W. M. Nickle, Minister, Department of Planning and Development, 20 June 1960. Bevis wrote that the federal government had shipped 65,000 brochures on “Your Basement Fallout Shelter” to the Ontario government for distribution to the public. The day after this memo an Ontario government press release announced the ‘demo’ fallout shelter at University and College
- ³ Moose Factory was the original Cree settlement in this area and it was also the location for the first Hudson’s Bay Fur Trading post in northern Ontario (1673). Most early settlement (pre 1950) and development in the Moosonee/Moose Factory Island area occurred on Moose Factory rather than Moosonee.
- ⁴ The Census Canada 1961 population for Moosonee did not include military personnel and families. Most of the military moved to Moosonee in 1962.
- ⁵ My (draft) PhD thesis includes a chapter documenting water and sewer sources retrieved from the Archives of Ontario (e.g. OWRC reports).
- ⁶ The MDAB became a municipality in 2001 and is now known as the Town of Moosonee.
- ⁷ As an example of transformation, the Officer’s Mess became the Art room, the Junior Ranks (Airmen’s) Mess became the high school library, and the Sergeants’ Mess became the Home Economics room.
- ⁸ Jill Grant, “History Matters,” Plan Canada (Spring, 2015): 50-52.



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Aging in the North

Transportation barriers

By Maryse Raymond, Kris Longston & Krishnan Venkataraman



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

A three kilometre stretch of Municipal Road #8 connects the communities of Onaping and Levack in Greater Sudbury

Northern Ontario is characterized by large distances between urban centres. This pattern exists even within Greater Sudbury where historical mining settlements resulted in significant distances between the communities of the amalgamated city. With one in five people projected to be over the age of 70 by 2036, this poses some transportation challenges.

Sudbury Planning Services Division and Huntington University researchers partnered to understand the challenges unique to an aging population in the rural communities that make up the City of Greater Sudbury. Specifically, the study explored barriers to services for seniors resulting from a lack of mobility in Onaping and Levack (combined population 2,042).

Onaping and Levack were created in the early 20th century as company towns to serve nearby mining operations. Overtime they were amalgamated into the Municipality of Onaping Falls and in

2001 into the City of Greater Sudbury. Residents of Onaping and Levack have no regular public transit service and those without a car must rely on a TransCab service to travel 11 km. to the nearest grocery store and 50 km. to the large-format retail stores. However, these remote communities offer the most inexpensive options for seniors as real estate closer to Sudbury is relatively more expensive.

The study used a questionnaire to poll older residents in Onaping and Levack to document transportation barriers to accessing essential services as a result of their location. While the response rate was low, the results indicate that the barriers will only increase over the next 10 to 15 years. Measures are needed to alleviate the mobility challenges for older adults residing in rural and remote communities.

Maryse Raymond completed her BA in Gerontology from Huntington University (Federated with Laurentian University) in June 2015.

Krishnan Venkataraman is an assistant professor and chair of gerontology at Huntington University. He is also the director for the Canadian Institute for Studies in Aging. Kris Longston, MCIP, RPP, is the acting manager of community and strategic planning for the City of Greater Sudbury. Complete details of the study may be obtained by contacting the authors.



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Complex planning challenges

By Shannon Dodd Smith

What is the vast space found on the flip-side of the Ontario Road Map mashed in your car door pocket? For many Ontarians, it might be the place they rarely go or hear about; the place where they imagine the “stop-and-go” 400-series highways peter out to quiet single-lane ribbons leading to elusive points across Northern Ontario and the rest of Canada. Likely it is the unincorporated or unorganized territory in Northern Ontario.

Relative to its population density, in the absence of municipal-type planning controls, the unincorporated territory generates surprisingly complex land use planning challenges along with tough legal questions rivalling those in more populated areas of the province.

Unincorporated Territory

Unincorporated territory occupies more than 93 per cent¹ of Northern Ontario. A space so comparatively large, that the Ontario Road Map uses a different scale for this geography. It is generally found in the land base bounded by the French River to the south, Quebec on the east and Manitoba on the west.

Like islands in the unorganized territory, there are 144 single-tier organized municipalities² stringing to the north and west such as Timmins, Hearst, Pickle Lake and Kenora, and more than 100 First Nation reserves, such as Taykwa Tagamou, Michipicoten and Niskandaga, some of which are accessible only by ice road or airplane.

Lands in the unorganized territory can be described as Crown land or geographic townships, which have historically surveyed boundaries rather than political borders. They include unorganized settlements, such as Upsala and Gogama, which have no elected councils, official plans or zoning by-laws. They may be patented or unpatented, depending on whether the lands have been transferred from the federal or provincial government to a private owner.³ They may be under the delegated authority of a planning board, such as the Lakehead Rural Planning Board, which as the mandate to make decisions under the *Planning Act*. These tend to be communities in more densely populated areas adjacent to municipalities, in this case the City of Thunder Bay.

Land uses

A range of land uses and activities occur on unincorporated territory lands. These include traditional and modern use of the land by Aboriginal communities, mining and forestry—roughly 75 per cent of Ontario’s 40-plus mines are on unincorporated territory⁴—world-class recreation areas that give Canada its ubiquitous outdoorsy image, such as Quetico, Wabikimi and the Woodland Caribou provincial parks (e.g., Lake Nipigon and Lake Superior, etc.) and critical ecological functions (e.g., the

Boreal Forest⁵). Also key infrastructure connects Ontario to the rest of Canada and North America, such as highways, ice roads, rail lines and transmission lines.

Surprisingly, the unincorporated territory is also home to 3.5 per cent of the 803,238 permanent residents who live in the North. Not surprisingly, 73 per cent of these residents live within 20 km of a municipal boundary⁶. Some receive services similar to those of a municipality, and some receive no services at all, depending where they live. Services are delivered by District Services Boards, Local Services Boards, Local Roads Boards, Statue Labour Commissions, Conservation Authorities, District Health Units, Planning Boards and provincial government ministries.

Land use planning context

In the unincorporated territory the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* applies to all patented lands and focuses development activity on the sustainable management or use of resources and resource-based recreational uses, rather than other forms of development. (policy 1.1.6) Development must also be appropriate to planned or existing infrastructure and it must avoid the unjustified or unnecessary expansion of this infrastructure. (policy 1.1.6.2)



Shannon Dodd Smith



IMAGE COURTESY OF MICHAEL DODD SMITH

Hemlo Open Pit Mine in UT

The only permitted uses of lands in the unincorporated territory that are adjacent to and surrounding municipalities are those related to the management or use of resources and resource-based recreational uses, unless the area lies within a planning board area, the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are planned or available and are financially viable over their life cycle and it is found through a comprehensive review that the impacts of growth will not unduly strain available municipal/regional/provincial services. (policy 1.1.6.4)

In unincorporated territory outside of planning board areas, landowners apply directly to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for *Planning Act* approvals on land division, easements, partial discharges of mortgage and validations. They may also seek information from the ministry on the Building Code Act 1992⁷, and request letters of conformity that are issued to permit construction within areas covered by Minister's Zoning Orders. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing receives about 50-60 consent applications from landowners in the unincorporated territory each year, in addition to numerous applications for approval of plans of condominium and subdivision, etc.

To learn more about the PPS and land use planning in unincorporated territory, refer to An Introduction to the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014: [Northern Ontario Draft for Discussion](#).

Shannon Dodd Smith, MSc, MCIP, RPP, is the manager of community planning & development with the Municipal Affairs & Housing-Municipal Services Office North in Thunder Bay (which also services the unincorporated territory in the northwest).

Endnotes

- ¹ Statistics Canada, 2011 Census
- ² www.amcto.com/ What Are Local Governments?
- ³ <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/crown-patents>
- ⁴ <http://www.oma.on.ca/en/>
- ⁵ <http://www.ontarionature.org/>
- ⁶ Ontario of Ministry of Finance, <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/>, Profile of Ontario's Unincorporated Areas.
- ⁷ MMAH is responsible for the Building Code Act in UT for buildings other than on-site sewage systems. Construction of buildings is exempt from permit requirements, but work must still comply with the *Ontario Building Code*.



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Planning for neighbourhood safety

By Lee-Ann Chevrette

Crime has significant impacts on community health and wellbeing¹, and has had a corrosive effect on Thunder Bay's South Core neighbourhood. Unfortunately the negative perception of safety has in some ways hindered revitalization of this core area and adjacent residential communities.

Thunder Bay's South Core neighbourhood—also known as Downtown Fort William or Downtown Thunder Bay South—is the urban core of the former city of Fort William, which amalgamated with Port Arthur to become Thunder Bay in 1970. The area comprises a classic mix of land uses and built form reflective of many North American cities. However, the neighbourhood experiences the highest number of calls to the Thunder Bay Police Service for violent, property and quality of life concerns, when compared with other Thunder Bay neighbourhoods.



Lee-Ann Chevrette

Improving safety in the South Core neighbourhood is a high priority among residents, business owners and the city. Municipal planners have an important role in designing urban environments, and for many years have been involved in initiatives aimed at revitalizing and enhancing safety in this neighbourhood. Previous approaches include a South Core Neighbourhood Renewal Plan (2004) and the City of Thunder Bay's Core Area Renewal Plan, an incentive program to assist property owners and tenants in the downtown core areas to rehabilitate buildings.

More recent efforts to improve safety in the neighbourhood have focussed on the design of the physical environment. In October 2014, a comprehensive safety and security assessment, based on the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design² was conducted within South Core. These principles encourage the proper design and effective use of the built environment to reduce the fear and incidence of crime and to improve overall quality of life^{3,4}. In May 2015, a transit-specific assessment was conducted also using the CPTED principles to identify the most suitable location for the South Core neighbourhood transit hub, from a public safety and security perspective⁵.

The South Core Assessment Report identified numerous safety and security concerns and included 14 recommendations to improve public safety. City council adopted the Assessment Report as a guiding document and supported the creation of a South Core Public Safety Task Force for a three-year term, to prioritize and implement the report's recommendations.

Created in April 2015 the task force is a diverse, multi-organizational team. By prioritizing the report recommendations and consulting with neighbourhood stakeholders, the task force created an action plan. A recent initiative was the South Core Public Safety Ambassadors Pilot Project. Two summer students to patrol the neighbourhood on foot for nine weeks, to be 'the eyes and ears on the street.' The students, wearing a bright green t-shirt with the word "respect" written across the front, were a consistent positive presence in the

neighbourhood; they cleaned up garbage, reported incidents of graffiti and other emerging safety issues, promoted community safety, and raised awareness about the role the community can play in crime prevention. Feedback about their presence in the neighbourhood has been overwhelmingly positive.

This program links with the city's broader respect initiative, which promotes the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that recognize the importance of human dignity and seeks to raise awareness of how community members should treat one another.

Lighting enhancements were also identified as a priority in the Assessment Report, specifically the conversion of lighting to LED. Thunder Bay is currently implementing a city-wide residential LED-lighting conversion program. Given the priority placed on addressing safety concerns, the city is piloting LED lighting at high profile non-residential intersections in the South Core.

The complexity of crime and disorder in this neighbourhood necessitates a collaborative approach that will facilitate and incorporate the expertise of numerous individuals, organizations and city departments. The inclusion of CPTED principles in our efforts to build a safer community offers critical links to urban planning, transportation, economic development and use of public space. It will take time to make significant change and to re-shape this neighbourhood's physical and social landscape to improve safety for current and future stakeholders. This one approach on its own will not solve all of the South Core neighbourhood's safety and security issues, but we believe we've got a great team and a solid approach, and we're moving in the right direction to improve community safety.

Lee-Ann Chevrette is the City of Thunder Bay's Crime Prevention Council coordinator. She holds a Master's Degree in Northern Environments and Cultures from Lakehead University. Her professional experience crosses several sectors, including natural resource management, food security, land-use planning and crime prevention.

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Hollinger Gold Mine

By Mark Jensen & Cindy Welsh

This City of Timmins case study offers lessons that resonate across much of Northern Ontario wherever mining activity can be found. This unique project could not have proceeded under traditional planning approaches. The rejuvenation of a historic mining camp within a highly urbanized area of the city demanded new and innovative approaches to effectively balance economic needs with that of environmental and social expectations.

Hollinger Gold Mine

The Hollinger Gold Mine was one of the three major gold mines developed in Timmins and operated from 1910 to 1968. It yielded 19.5-million ounces of gold, which would be equivalent to \$2.34-billion at today's gold price of \$1,200.

The underground workings at the site were developed to a depth of 1,662-metres and included almost 600 kilometres of shafts and tunnels. Timmins came into existence as a result of mining settlements built to house the influx of people needed to work in the mines, including Hollinger. Timmins is now one of the largest cities in Northern Ontario with a population of about 43,000. It functions as the regional service centre for Northeastern Ontario.

With the closure of the Hollinger mine, the land surface was left in an unproductive and dangerous state with a variety of near-surface, mine-related hazards. Over time a number of sink holes occurred, some of which swallowed parking lots, buildings and even city buses. Clearly a long-term solution was required.

In 2007, Goldcorp Canada, owner of the former Hollinger Mine property, began to study the feasibility of redeveloping 101 hectares of the site into an open pit mine. The project would create 130 direct jobs and sustain 250 indirect jobs over the eight-to-10-year lifespan of the mine. The total capital investment is projected at \$87-million while operating costs are estimated to be \$565-million. The economic benefits of the project would be in the order of \$960- to \$1.02-billion. From an environmental and social benefit perspective, once the mining was completed the parcel of land would be rehabilitated and returned to the City of Timmins in the form of a public lake, parkland and trail system.

Planning approach

Resource extraction typically occurs well outside of municipal settlement boundary areas. In this case, the proposed open pit mine is located within the urban area of the city, less than one kilometre from the central business district, residential areas and a major commercial corridor. The key challenge for the

planners was determining how to permit the re-opening of the historic mining property in close proximity to sensitive land uses in an urbanized area of the community. While the mine would create jobs, eventually clean-up a hazardous site and bring it back into a productive land use, it also would have a number of potentially negative impacts on the surrounding built-up area during its operations.

Coincidentally, when Goldcorp began its pre-feasibility review of its former mining site, the Timmins was in the process of developing a new official plan. Through that process a Goldfield Area official plan designation was derived and approved in 2010 by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The intent of the designation is to recognize the potential for a renewed mineral mining operation and its longer term closure with permanent rehabilitation of the site. The official plan also states that mining operations in this designation are subject to a development agreement with the city.

In 2011, Timmins approved a new zoning by-law which rezoned a portion of the Goldfield area as mining and recognized the proposed new open pit mine as a permitted use. In addition to the requirements set out by both the federal and provincial governments in permitting the mine, Goldcorp needed to meet the requirements of the city's development agreement. These include the completion of a best management plan outlining how the company intends to manage air, noise, vibration, fly-rock and other nuisances related to mining activity and a complaint resolution protocol. It also addresses phasing of the mine development, buffering and berm placement, fencing, garbage removal, ingress and egress from the site, mine rock stockpiles management, monitoring instruments, rehabilitation and the completion of a subsequent land use plan. A letter of credit in the amount of \$10-million was also required by the city to help ensure the required works are completed.

Public consultation and engagement

Goldcorp undertook more than 30 supportive studies and required 12 government approvals to move forward with the project. The city required the completion of third party reviews of some of the studies to ensure that the recommended mitigating measures were appropriate in light of nearby sensitive land uses. The city and Goldcorp also held more than 21 workshops and stakeholder meetings (including Aboriginal groups) to address the potential impact of negative externalities, as well as introduce the complaint resolution process developed for the project and the subsequent land use



Mark Jensen



Cindy Welsh

plan for the property once mining ceases. Surveys also garnered feedback. Input was received from over 500 community members.

Goldcorp hired a community liaison coordinator to aid in the public consultation process and maintains this position. A website dedicated to the project and information centre were also established where the public could view the status of the work. In 2010, the Hollinger Project Community Advisory Committee was established with a mandate to liaise between Goldcorp and community members with regards to concerns, recommendations and future land uses associated with the project. Goldcorp further developed an on-line complaint form and internal resolution process to deal with public comments and concerns. There is also a web-enabled live monitoring program instituted for noise, vibration and dust which is available during the life of the project for public review. The company provides quarterly updates to the city council on project status and all complaints received.

Subsequent land uses

Based on a wide range of suggestions from the municipality and the public, a vision for the final land use plan was developed. A new trail system is to be provided within two years of the berm construction to connect to the city's extensive trail network. The new trail system will follow the landscape of the berm, providing opportunities for residents to walk, jog and cycle as well as rest areas, with seating and picnic facilities. In selected areas, the trail will also be paved and lit for evening use. Storyboards will be located along the trail providing information on points of interest and history of the Hollinger Mine.

Upon closure of the mine, the open pit area will eventually be flooded and a portion of the berm will be sloped down to meet the water and allow for safe access to the waterfront. A sand covered beach will be developed. The area adjacent to the beach will become a large park area enhanced with an urban forest, shrubs, hedges and other landscape features including picnic tables and benches. On top of the berm, a public viewing area will be

established providing a lookout area of the lake and the City of Timmins. Paved public parking will also be provided.

Lessons learned

This case study offers lessons that resonate across much of Northern Ontario wherever mining activity can be found. This unique project could not have proceeded with the application of traditional planning approaches. Key elements that contributed to the success of this project include:

Early consultation with approval authorities, Planners, Goldcorp and the public was key in developing an acceptable approach to allow this complex development to occur while effectively balancing competing public interests.

This case clearly demonstrates the important role that planners can play in guiding a development through an approvals process that could not be achieved through traditional planning approaches.

The importance of early, innovative and ongoing public involvement and engagement in the success of this project cannot be understated and has no doubt resulted in improved public acceptance and support.

Perhaps the most significant element of this project from a public perspective is the end vision for the site following the eventual mine closure. The development of a subsequent land use plan, enhanced by progressive rehabilitation, helps to promote trust and buy-in from the community for challenging projects such as this one.

Mark Jensen, BA, MPL, MCIP, RPP, is the director of community & development services for the City of Timmins and is a past Northern District Representative on OPPI Council. Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP, is the manager of planning for the City of Timmins and a member of the OPPI Northern District Leadership Team. This article follows from the brief introductory article in the July/August 2006, Vol. 21, No. 4, Ontario Planning Journal by Mark Jensen.



IMAGE COURTESY OF PORCUPINE GOLD MINES

Phased Mining Plan #2

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Unique challenges

By Matthew Dumont & Adam Curran

Our Northern landscape so unique in comparison to Southern Ontario. We are surrounded by beautiful forests, lakes and rivers. Along with the diverse and different landscapes come suitable habitat for unique species. Therein lies one of the most challenging issues the building industry is beginning to face in Northern Ontario, particularly in Sudbury, North Bay and surrounding areas: protecting species at risk.

Within the Nipissing and Sudbury Districts there are 11 species identified as endangered and threatened. These species include the barn swallow, bobolink, eastern meadowlark, loggerhead shrike, whip-poor-will, least bittern, Mississauga rattlesnake, shortjaw cisco, flooded jellyskin, blanding's turtle and Eastern musk turtle.

The two most prevalent species at risk in Sudbury are the Whip-poor-will and Blanding's Turtle. Since Sudbury has an estimated 50-year supply of residential and employment lands that covers a large geographical land mass, developers and private landowners within the urban boundary are challenged with the costs attributed to the provincial process associated with an overall benefit permit.

Several steps are taken when identifying species at risk in Northern Ontario. The first step is to complete a Natural Heritage Assessment. This requires a site visit and a background study to determine the existing landscape of the area. Once this is completed, the next step is to determine the appropriate habitat. If the area is characterized as a habitat for a Whip-poor-will or Blanding's Turtle or any of the other species listed as endangered or threatened, then a species-specific survey is required. The outcome of this survey will determine if the species at risk is located on the individuals' property, and if so, an overall benefit permit is required. This can be a lengthy and challenging task.

In the North there is limited expertise locally to conduct the

studies for these species. This can lead to further delays, along with large invoices. The process for private land owners applying to sever one or two lots can cost anywhere between \$2,000 and \$10,000. For large developers, looking at Plans of Subdivisions and more lots, it can easily cost between \$10,000 to over \$100,000. Costs can start escalating when factoring the on-going monitoring or the creation of an alternative habitat for species that could potentially be harmed within the development area.

Species at Risk can deter development in the North. The thought of having an endangered or threatened species on your property is being looked at negatively, rather than as unique privilege. In the United States there has been a push for incentives for private landowners who host these species on their property. There the government is working with developers and private landowners to protect vulnerable species and their habitats. A similar approach is needed in Northern Ontario if sustainable growth is to be realized.

Adam is seeking planners to interview. Please contact him if you have experience with an OMB hearing where endangered or threatened species was involved in the decision or if you have gone through an overall benefit permit process.

Matthew Dumont is a candidate member of OPPI who is preparing to write the final examination in spring of 2016. He recently joined Tulloch Engineering in Sudbury as its land use planner after spending four years representing Dalron Homes as their planner. Adam Curran is a candidate member of OPPI. Adam recently became the community planner for the Municipality of East Ferris after spending five years as a private sector consultant. Adam is also working towards his Masters of Environmental Science. His thesis is assessing the Endangered Species Act, 2007.



Matthew Dumont



Adam Curran



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Educating a new generation of planners

Indigenous planning

By Kathryn Trnavsky & Jeffrey Herskovits

How do you plan for or with communities who, as part of traditional culture, view land in a fundamentally different way than it is valued within our current planning framework? Planning for lands on which Indigenous communities live, or have a traditional claim, poses a significant challenge to the current planning regime.

To address these challenges, duty to consult legislation was introduced as a way to mitigate and facilitate dialogue among practitioners, developers and Indigenous communities throughout the consultation process. However, the legislation fails to promote an understanding of an Indigenous perspective as an avenue from which to build a sustainable and lasting partnership. Practitioners then, must develop a more critical understanding of the role of the planner when working with Indigenous communities on traditional lands.

Many planners do not typically receive training in Indigenous histories or planning as a part of their education and it is only through experience that the planner is able to learn of Indigenous histories, worldview and culturally appropriate forms of consultation or collaboration. Given the Supreme Court mandates for increased consultation, planning schools should play a role in developing a new generation of planners who are better equipped to understand the culture and values of Canada's Indigenous communities.

Under the guidance of Ryerson University professor Dr. Shelagh McCartney, a unique opportunity exists to begin to learn techniques for working with First Nation communities.

Prominent Indigenous scholar and professor Ted Jojola notes that

Indigenous planning is an emerging field and through acknowledgement and understanding of the differences in approaches to planning issues, practitioners can begin to identify and work towards community-based solutions.

Through continued partnership with a First Nation community in the north, project coordinators Jeffrey Herskovits and Kathryn Trnavsky, in collaboration with McCartney and +city lab, have embarked on a 6-8 month student-led initiative with support from the J. W. McConnell Family Foundation and Ryerson University through a RECODE Social Innovation Award. The initiative seeks to amplify the voices of First Nation youth within the planning framework and the community's decision-making process. Collaboratively we are working to create a series of programs and activities that will

enable and encourage youth to begin to reimagine spaces within their community.

Consultation with such First Nation communities must come in the form of partnerships that are founded on trust and understanding and a commitment to the continued support of Indigenous cultures and values.

[Kathryn Trnavsky](#) and [Jeffrey Herskovits](#) are graduates of Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning. Both are student members of OPPI and currently working as contributing researchers at +city lab. Together, Kathryn and Jeffrey were awarded the RECODE at Ryerson Social Innovation Grant for their work on a First Nations youth initiative supported by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation.



Kathryn Trnavsky



Jeffrey Herskovits

Local Food Systems

Creating opportunity

By Thora Carlidge

Intrigued with the challenge of advancing local food awareness and urban agriculture in Northern Ontario since relocating to Thunder Bay, I am motivated by my family's farm management and agricultural teaching experience in rural and Northern Ontario a century ago.

My grandmother and step-grandmother, friends and graduates of U of Toronto (1911), owned a poultry operation on 21 acres of farmland they purchased in 1921 outside Unionville, then a rural village about 15 miles northeast of Toronto. Through the 1920s, they would have upwards of 600 laying hens at any one time producing 1000+ eggs weekly for the downtown Toronto market. One hundred years later, Unionville is now part of the Greater Toronto Area and the Martin-Harvey Poultry Farm displaced by

suburban development. Their entrepreneurship has translated into my passion for planning for food systems that can sustain healthy northern cities.

With the 2007 publication of the American Planning Association's Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning, municipal planners on both sides of the U.S./Canada border were introduced to the link between built environment design and public health, in particular the role of land use planning policy, zoning regulation and urban design in shaping healthy communities. A connection that was also recognized by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute in 2011 with its call to action: Planning for Food Systems in Ontario.

There is certainly legislative and policy support in Ontario for



food systems planning. Under the *Provincial Policy Statement* prime agricultural areas are protected for long-term agriculture use, as are specialty crop areas and Canada Land Inventory class 1-7 lands within prime agricultural areas (*Section 2.3*). However, except for the healthy communities policies that accommodate an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment, institutional, recreational, open space and other uses to meet long-term needs, the *PPS* is silent on urban agriculture.

In fact, the Northern Ontario Districts of Rainy River, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Algoma, Manitoulin, Timiskaming and Nipissing have little prime agricultural land as defined in the *PPS* but they all have concentrations of agricultural activity that contribute to a diversified economy.

Despite their limited jurisdiction over the food system, municipalities are faced with the economic and social consequences of residents' uneven access to food and public health consequences of poor diets. Authors Rod MacRae and Kendal Donahue note in a [study](#) commissioned by the Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute, "Given the diverse, complex and interconnected ways in which food affects our lives, municipalities increasingly need integrated ways to meet economic, social and environmental objectives." (Page 5)

Yet barriers remain to creating a food system that is locally-sourced, easily accessed and provides healthy fare for urban residents. A lack of clear zoning regulations that are friendly to small-scale farming is a key challenge to urban agriculture. Having access to available land within urban limits is another challenge, especially if vacant lots and brownfields require investment in infrastructure and clean-up. The absence of a labour force with food production skills further hinders development of a local food system, and this is compounded by a lack of training and certification in production and processing of local food.

It is encouraging that, as expectations for food production in and near urban areas have grown, so too have opportunities to advance a local food system. In Northern Ontario, Thunder Bay and Sudbury are credited as early supporters of local food systems through cross-sectoral interest in solving local issues such as increased use of food banks, health problems derived from poor diets and the costs of buying local. The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (2014) sets out the municipality's commitment to creating a healthy, equitable and sustainable food system that contributes to economic and ecological health and social

well-being of the city and surrounding rural areas. Supporters of Eat Local Sudbury Co-op and Food Hub are aiding local farmers and contributing to a sustainable food system within and around Greater Sudbury. More recently, Dryden's Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op is assuming a food hub role in that region.

These northern municipalities demonstrate proactive support for sustainable food systems and link local food initiatives to the provincial and federal food, agriculture, public health and economic development policy that governs Northern Ontario.

The entrepreneurship of my grandmothers in their 1920s farm operation and agricultural education ventures in rural and Northern Ontario reflects the same spirit of optimism and resilience that characterizes the 21st century food policy



Thora Cartlidge

entrepreneurship exhibited in Northern Ontario municipalities.

Thora Cartlidge, MCIP, RPP, AICP, LEED AP-ND is a senior planner with the City of Thunder Bay, Development and Emergency Services Department, Planning Services Division. She served on the OPPI Professional Practice and Development Committee that produced the Continuous Professional Learning Program Guide and currently is the Northern District representative to the Professional Standards and Registration Committee.



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Investing in Northern downtowns

A study of five cities



By Glenn Miller & Ariana Cancelli

Dealing with cultural, ideological and practical differences between a city's downtown and its burgeoning suburbs can be a source of heartache for municipal politicians. Decisions on how and where to invest a city's budget for the greater public good are all too often dependent on intuition rather than specific evidence. The scale of this political dilemma is magnified in a resource-dependent region like Northern Ontario, where municipal fortunes have historically been tied to boom-and-bust cycles, making it difficult for cities to follow through on long-term plans.

For a handful of municipal planners in Northern Ontario's five largest cities—Timmins, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury and North Bay—persuading municipal leaders to support downtown revitalization plans with capital investments received a boost in 2013 when the Ontario Trillium Foundation agreed to fund an 18-month study led by the Canadian Urban Institute. The study comprised five case studies, which were designed to demonstrate the value of investing in Northern Downtowns using five principles.

Although Northern Ontario has some unique challenges, the evaluation identified evidence of innovation and renewal:

Visibility—Downtowns play a central role in the life of all five cities, helped by multi-sectoral partnerships that have created new downtown facilities such as the School of Architecture in downtown Sudbury, the School of Law at Lakehead in downtown Thunder Bay and the Algoma School of Music in downtown Sault Ste. Marie.

When amalgamations increase the geographic size of a city, the role played by its downtown becomes even more important in terms of representing the visible face of the city to outside investors and visitors. However, downtown investment must compete with funds needed to maintain roads, services and provide support for historic centres across a larger land mass.

Achieving a desirable balance in terms of municipal investment priorities can be a challenge, one which the amalgamated City of Greater Sudbury addresses by organizing special citizen forums.



Glenn Miller



Ariana Cancelli

Visionary—Committed leadership from both public and private sector leaders and the ability to develop and maintain a shared vision for Northern downtowns are essential requirements to sustaining momentum through election cycles. A strong motivation in all five cities is the goal of developing economic conditions that can provide employment opportunities for youth.

Perhaps the most encouraging trend in Northern downtowns is that BIAs are working collaboratively with municipal planners to develop and implement downtown-focused plans. These plans, which typically begin with the development of a shared vision for the future, are providing a solid platform for improving a community's competitive positioning.

Prosperity—The competition for retail dollars can be fierce. Notwithstanding the positive influence of downtown BIAs, the impact of suburban malls and inward-facing downtown malls can be devastating and long-lasting. Thanks to extensive provincial investment in research institutes linked to local universities, the economies of the larger Northern cities have become considerably more diverse in recent years. Downtowns such as those in Sault Ste.

Marie and Thunder Bay have also made the most of their waterfronts, creating attractive parks, trails and other public realm amenities with the potential to stimulate additional investment.

Livability—The goal of creating downtowns that are vibrant, livable and connected is a work in progress in all five Northern cities. Planners have to overcome perceptions about public



Skateboarders' scene

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

safety in North Bay and Thunder Bay for example, while Sudbury faces practical challenges such as higher construction costs for materials and labour.

Strategy—The importance of using scarce resources strategically to leverage capital investments to implement downtown plans was well understood in each of the cities evaluated. In Timmins, for example, because there was an urban design plan in place, the city was able to undertake dramatic streetscape enhancements when the time came to upgrade hydro facilities that required rebuilding the main street.

Even though municipal investment in downtowns typically deliver a higher return than other locations in a city, municipal decision-makers have an obligation to distribute funds equitably and require hard evidence to justify a change in this practice. Improving the share of downtown growth relative to the wider city is a continuing challenge.

Vacant stores on mainstreet are the bane of BIAs. A recent innovation in North Bay aims to reduce its inventory of vacant retail and business space in downtown. The brainchild of the city's planning and economic development specialists, the Opportunities Tour involves a free assessment and advice to business owners by a volunteer team of realtors, designers, building inspectors, electricians and contractors. The expectation is that this will expose vacant properties to more potential investors while giving the owners an opportunity to make strategic improvements or modify their marketing.

The need to deal with winter conditions is not unique to Northern Ontario but other cities seem to be tackling the issue

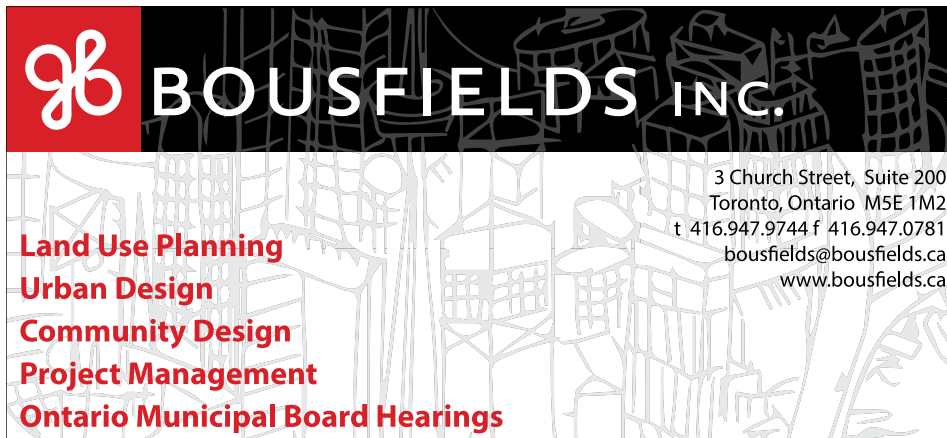
more directly, beyond organizing special events. A common problem identified in surveys and interviews is that surface parking lots tend to remain unploughed, seriously reducing the availability of parking for shoppers and other potential visitors.

The study established measures of growth and investment, requiring the integration of a wide range of metrics.

- Using a common set of principles and data from similar sources and time periods provided a basis for gauging performance of one city's downtown relative other downtowns.
- Assembling data on municipal capital investments over a 10-year period illustrated the share of municipal investment that went into downtown versus the city as a whole.
- Identifying effective programs and practices with a focus on success factors offered a way to share experiences among colleagues in various Northern cities.

An important legacy from the project is a dedicated [website](#) designed to facilitate continued collaboration. The platform allows the five cities to share updates on progress as well as access evolving data about other Canadian downtowns.

Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, and Ariana Cancelli, OPPI candidate member, MPL, were part of the CUI team working on study, The Value of Investing in Northern Downtowns. The Value of Investing in Canadian Downtowns recently won the Pinnacle Award from the International Downtowns Association. Glenn Miller led the project. Katherine Morton, MCIP, RPP, who now works with the Ontario Growth Secretariat, was the project manager.



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TORONTO DISTRICT

The Evolution of Yorkville

By Caroline Samuel

Over 30 planners gathered on a sunny Thursday evening July 9th to walk the famous neighbourhood of Yorkville in the City of Toronto. Toronto senior planner Oren Tamir and heritage preservation services manager Mary MacDonald led the group through 10 stops within the Historic Yonge Heritage Conservation District Study Area and the Yorkville-Hazelton Heritage Conservation District highlighting the evolution of land use changes in the area.



A summer walking tour, conducted by the Toronto District and City of Toronto Planning staff

The significant historical and architectural character of the Yorkville Triangle and Scollard Hazelton areas make it an important part of the city's rich legacy of neighbourhoods. Founded in 1808, incorporated as a village in 1853, and annexed by the City of Toronto in 1883, the Town of Yorkville began as a working class streetcar suburb with two main industries: the Yorkville Brick Yards in today's Ramsden Park, and beer making with breweries such as The Severn Brewery and the Joseph Bloor Brewery.

The tour began at the site of the former Village of Yorkville Town Hall, built in 1860 and later damaged by fire, and the Yorkville Firehall, built in

1876, that still stands today. At each stop Tamir and MacDonald provided insight into the city's efforts to preserve historic buildings and façades, to ease transitions and keep a human-scale buffer between old and new.

Since the late 1800s Yorkville has continued to evolve and reinvent itself. In the 1920s Bay Street was created, along with the widening of Davenport Road. The introduction of Bay Street began to create visual differences between developments east and west of Bay. In the 1950s the construction of the Bloor subway line resulted in demolition of many historic buildings on Cumberland Avenue. Significant changes occurred between the 1950s and '70s when high-end retail, restaurants and hotels began to appear.

Yorkville continues to thrive and reinvent itself: from a residential suburb, to a bohemian culture centre in the 1960s filled with coffee houses that spawned some of Canada's greatest musicians, to today's high-end retail, restaurants and hotels. By leveraging development proposals the city has played a major role in creating green walkways to open up views of historic landmarks (e.g., former city hall clock tower) and to create pedestrian linkages between public spaces. Some developments have been used to create privately-owned publically-accessible open places (POPS) such as the Rose Garden adjacent to the Four Seasons Hotel. A key part of the city's public realm network, POPS provide open space within Toronto's dense urban landscape, which complement existing and planned parks, open spaces and natural areas.

Some of the tallest buildings in the city are proposed in Yorkville and the city plans to leverage these opportunities to link public spaces and encourage a mix of uses to maintain the diverse and unique character of the area.

Caroline Samuel, MCIP, RPP is a member of the OPPI Toronto District and works as a senior planner at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. She is currently on secondment with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport working on the Ontario Place Revitalization Project.

PEOPLE

New partner at MHBC

Jamie Robinson, MCIP, RPP, has been appointed partner with MHBC. Jamie began his career in 2003 with Meridian Planning and became an associate in 2011. In 2013, Jamie became part of the MHBC team through the merger of Meridian Barrie and MHBC. Jamie is a highly respected professional in the field of land use planning and provides high quality services to public and private sector clients.

MHBC also recently promoted **Scott Allen, MCIP, RPP**, to associate in recognition of his ongoing commitment, leadership and client development.



Jamie Robinson

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Promoting planning and planners

Squarely in focus

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as OPPI President. I look forward to meeting you, to sharing ideas and to creating solutions we can implement together that serve the profession today and for years to come. It is an honour and a responsibility that I take very seriously. I promise to bring my passion for planners and the planning profession to the opportunities and challenges in the term ahead.

OPPI is known for its integrity and professionalism. In fact at a recent Engaging Associations Forum, it was raised as a stellar example of a professional organization that anticipates and addresses its members' needs through good governance, quality member services, strategic partnerships and sound financial management. I will continue to work with Council, staff and the membership to strengthen the organization and the practice of planning in Ontario.

This means advancing professional regulation legislation to gain additional recognition for the planner's role in protecting and furthering the public interest. Planners are involved in so many aspects of our social, cultural, built and natural environments that their role in shaping our communities through their professional advice needs to be acknowledged and safeguarded.

OPPI has earned the support of Etobicoke Lakeshore MPP Peter Milczyn on this path to professional regulation. Milczyn will sponsor a private members bill to enhance the regulation of professional planners in Ontario. This will allow first reading and enable the legislature to begin consideration of this matter.

At the same time, as you know, the national voice of the planning profession is undergoing a significant challenge. I believe in the value of a national voice for planning and I know that the organizational, governance and financial solutions exist to ensure that CIP remains relevant to planners across the country, including those in Ontario. As we await the outcome of CIP's FutureFORWARD task force, stay engaged and focused on the future.

Meanwhile, OPPI must continue its unwavering focus on strengthening this Institute's voice and influence and expanding the profession's body of knowledge. OPPI remains forward-thinking, focused on professionalism, education and interdisciplinary collaboration. We will continue to showcase the value planners make in the lives of Ontarians and the importance of independent professional opinion. We will strive for excellence in governing a membership-based organization and leading practices in financial management.



Andrea Bourrie

Past President Paul Stagl's contributions to enhancing OPPI's strength and resilience were remarkable and have well positioned the organization for its next evolution. I extend all our thanks to Paul.

This term OPPI Council will be undertaking a new Strategic Plan under the direction of President Elect Jason Ferrigan. I know that we can count on all of your input and constructive dialogue as the plan takes shape in 2016.

Please reach out to say hello next time our paths cross. Offer your comments and share your thoughts. I promise to listen and take the appropriate action as I embark on this exciting journey as OPPI President. Be assured, I have the best interests of the profession squarely in focus.

Andrea Bourrie, MCIP, RPP

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

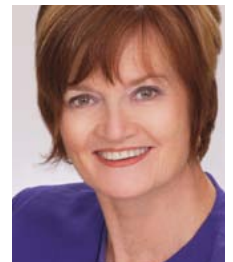
RPPs: Agents of Change

By Lee Anne Doyle

As professional planners we are responsible for introducing positive change and managing transition, envisioning the future and communicating that vision to others. We must set clear performance expectations, develop the capability to reorganize people and reallocate resources. Professional planners have an important role in communicating and facilitating change processes. We have to be open and willing to change and to help foster an environment in which change is welcomed and not feared.

Professional planners are often caught up in the implications and ramifications of change and need the tools to manage it. At the organizational level this refers to structure, leadership and communication.

Structure—Business strategies with measurable, tangible results are essential to managing organizational change. Is the organization properly situated to deal with sudden changes in demand? How flexible is the organization? (Is there a plan in place



Lee Anne Doyle

to prepare people for change?) Different generations respond to change in unique ways: how do we create a strategy that recognizes and respects this reality?

Collaboration, whether it be with the public, decision-makers or colleagues, is a significant aspect of managing change. Professional planners collaborate with a variety of disciplines depending on their area of practice.

Advocating and implementing change is most effective when delivered by a team. Team members are trained to know how to deal with change and reinforce patience and flexibility. Delivering the message of change must be started early enough to understand the implications and prepare the public and leaders for the message. Professional planners may embrace coaching and mentorship opportunities in adapting to change.

Leadership—A lack of leadership to manage change can spell disaster. As professional planners we need to ensure that change is proactive and purposeful. This means responding to change as an intentional, goal-oriented activity. The major reason change efforts fail comes down to people. People typically resist change because it requires them to modify or eliminate ways of working that have been successful or at least familiar to them. Embracing change requires flexibility and adaptability.

Communication—Dialogue in all its forms is essential to embracing change. Knowing how to deliver news about change and how to prepare employees for change is key to embracing new ideas and implementing a positive process. It is important to have a good communication plan to inform people of what is going on and the reasons for the change, to identify the obstacles and strategize how to overcome them. In this age of instant communication this means using social media to deliver messages and having strategies for dealing with personal opinions expressed in very public ways which can have a lasting impact at both an institutional and personal level.

It is essential to ensure there is a shared understanding of the change(s) being implemented so that everyone is on the same page. If everyone understands the message, the better they will be able to overcome obstacles.

Continuous Professional Learning

Adapting to legislative and policy changes is essential to how planners do their jobs. As professional planners we realize learning is life long and seek out opportunities for Continuous Professional Learning. This begins with self-assessment. Identifying and continuously improving core change management competencies which are identified in the OPPI Competency Tree (e.g., communication, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, conflict

resolution, facilitated decision-making and leadership). Check out the OPPI courses, events and workshops, as well as digital learning platforms. Watch for a new OPPI course on Change Management and Succession Planning in 2016.

Stay tuned for the Planning Exchange Blog where members can exchange views, share experiences and ask questions about change management. The discussion questions below are offered as a way to kick off the conversation.

Look at change as a personal challenge. Seek out the opportunities that change presents. Keep a positive attitude—your positive and enthusiastic attitude will influence others and will make your job easier.

Embrace change!

Lee Anne Doyle, MCIP, RPP, AMCT, OCT, is an experienced planning practitioner in the field of change management, and currently serves on the OPPI Professional Standards & Registration Committee.

SOCIAL MEDIA

I Don't See It That Way

By Robert Voigt

We have all seen these images. Glossy representations of future developments brought to life through the magic of various computer programs and the skills of the artists and technicians that use them. The technology behind these would have been largely inconceivable not that long ago. But the ability to transform highly-detailed design drawings into photorealistic renderings to represent a vision of the future is now available to even the smallest of planning and design firms. But it is not the technology that is important. In fact it is what is being depicted that we should pay much closer attention to.



Robert Voigt

Although presented in surprising accuracy, it is often the elements of style in these renderings that has the greatest impact. It is equally important to consider how things are represented, as it is to consider what is represented. Given the power of such photographic quality illustrations to convince the eye and mind of the viewer that what he or she is seeing is real, we should take extra care to remember both the audience and the context in which these are being used.

Planners need to be aware whether the images are being used to try to sell an idea or facilitate meaningful dialog about a proposal and its merits. We need to ask questions: Is what is being presented accurate? Is it based on a likely outcome in terms of site function and use? Does the image offer a clear representation of the physical aspects of a proposal? Are the people being presented realistically, illustrating the probable use of the future development?

These architectural and site renderings often come to life in

Want to share . . .

Want to share your opinions on change management? Email blog@ontarioplanners.ca with your answers to the following questions. Your opinions will help shape a future post about change management on OPPI's Planning Exchange Blog in the New Year.

- 1. In your opinion, what are the main reason change efforts fail?*
- 2. What techniques do you use to manage change?*
- 3. What tools and/or qualities does a good agent of change possess?*

ways that are emotionally evocative because of their artistic style. Unfortunately however, they often contain any number of characteristics that make them less effective for municipalities using them to review proposals. For example, commonplace artistic interpretation enters these images in the following forms: developments shown as being bathed in light from all directions that seemingly originates from the heavens, site surroundings are carefully sanitized of distracting elements that are otherwise important contextual features and absurd combinations of people populate the proposed site doing things that have no realistic precedent.

We are often presented images of people using spaces that go beyond the creative expression of what is probable and instead depict what is hardly even possible. For example: groups of cyclists riding along parking area planter strips, unicyclists and clowns in business district pocket parks, people laughing and randomly frolicking through stark urban plazas, downtown high-rise developments with no surrounding buildings, roadways completely devoid of traffic as if resulting from a zombie apocalypse, hipster musicians precariously perched on random concrete outcroppings, and large groups of completely homogenous people with no age or ethnic variety. As a result a lot of important information is missing, and far too much artistic imagery replaces it. These characteristics can make the renderings difficult to interpret in development review processes, which are intended to assess the public merits of a proposal. In fact these images can skew the dialog.

There have always been various artistic styles used when creating illustrations of new developments. They are always influenced by the culture and tools of their particular time period. However, the photorealism of images that are developed using contemporary technology can be more easily misinterpreted by people than hand-drawn illustrations. Planners need to be aware of how powerful these images can be for the audience, especially when they are not trained or familiar with the nuances of these renderings. Here is a link to a [website](#) that provides a weekly curated collection of images that are often more fantasy than communication tool. It offers an ongoing discussion about the stylistic choices, effectiveness and often unusual character of architectural/site renderings and illustrations.

I suggest that renderings that create confusion or present highly improbable scenarios are intentional misinformation. This can even approach unethical behaviour when it is used to confuse and reduce the level of understanding of what is being proposed. As planners we should avoid using these excessively stylized images when they deviate from the on-the-ground reality and/or the likeliest outcome. I am not suggesting that we

eliminate artistry in renderings; just supersede it with greater attention to effectively depicting the quality of the proposal's design elements. They should be less about the technology and how real it can make the absurd look, and more about how well it can be crafted to illustrate compelling visions of the future.

When we use these renderings in our proposals we should ensure that what is being presented is based on an accurate depiction of the context and an understanding of local culture, how people use the public realm and how they interact with each other. By maintaining this perspective the resulting renderings are less likely to be fanciful utopian images and more likely to be useful communication tools and catalysts of dialog.

Robert Voigt MCIP, RPP is a professional planner, artist, and writer. He is recognized as an innovator in community engagement and healthy community design. Robert is the chair of the OPPI Planning Issues Strategy Group, member of PPS' Placemaking Leadership Council and writer for Urban Times and publisher of the CivicBlogger.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Members are encouraged to send letters about content in the *Ontario Planning Journal* to the [editor](#). Please direct comments or questions about Institute activities to the OPPI president at the OPPI office or by email to the [executive director](#). Keep letters under 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER ALERT

2016 Membership Renewal

OPPI's 2016 Membership Renewal begins in November. Your renewal notice will arrive by email. Just log on to your profile at ontarioplanners.ca/member-login to verify that your email on file with OPPI is current. Once you receive your renewal notice, your profile page will display a red Renew My Membership button. Thank you for your continued support.

As a member of OPPI, we also encourage you to become a member of the Canadian Institute of Planners. To renew your membership visit the [CIP web site](#).



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